

## **REMARKS**

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and objections, and further examination are requested.

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and further examination are requested.

Claims 1-3, 5, 8, 10, 11, 14, 20, 23, 29, 31-36, 38, 41, and 47 were pending in this application. Claims 1-3, 10, 31, 33 and 34, stand rejected. Claims 5, 8, 11, 14, 20, 23, 29, 32, 35-38, 41 and 47 have been objected to as depending from a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if written in independent form. Claims 1, 5, 11, 14, 20, 23, 29, 32, 33, 35, 38, 41 and 47, are amended herein, and claims 2, 3, 8, 10, 31, 34 and 36 are cancelled herein. No new matter has been added.

The specification and abstract have been carefully reviewed and revised to make grammatical and idiomatic improvements in order to aid the Examiner in further consideration of the application. Amendments to the specification are contained herein. Moreover, a substitute Abstract including revisions has been prepared and is submitted herewith. Also submitted herewith is a marked-up copy of the Abstract indicating the changes incorporated therein. No new matter has been added.

The Applicants greatly appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 5, 8, 11, 14, 20, 23, 29, 32, 35-38, 41 and 47 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In view of this indication, claim 1 has been amended to include all of the limitations of previously pending claims 2 and 8, claims 5 and 32 have been rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their base claim (i.e., claim 1), claim 33 has been amended to include all of the limitations of previously pending claims 34 and 36, and claim 35 has been rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of its base claim (i.e., claim 33).

Claims 1-3, 10, 31, 33 and 34 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Epworth (U.S. Patent No. 6,626,589) (hereinafter referred to as "Epworth"). Claims 2, 3, 10, 31 and 34 are cancelled herein, thus rendering the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of these claims moot. Moreover, by amending claims 1 and 33 as described above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of these claims has also been


rendered moot.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all of the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe there are any remaining issues that must be resolved before this application can be passed to issue, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Toru Shiozaki et al.

By:   
Kevin McDermott  
Registration No. 48,113  
Attorney for Applicants

KM/JRF/km  
Washington, D.C. 20006-1021  
Telephone (202) 721-8200  
Facsimile (202) 721-8250  
March 17, 2008